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ABSTRACT

Although talking to children is a daily activity for almost everyone at some stage in one's life and an essential activity for professionals who work with children, there has been little research attention paid to this activity. This book describes communication with children between the ages of 4 and 12 years, focusing on open question-and-answer sessions with children, especially those sessions related to therapeutic assistance for children and conversations in school. Following a general introduction in chapter 1, chapter 2 presents information on child development from ages 4 to 12. Chapter 3 discusses the characteristics of conversing and interviewing, including conversation quality, conditions for communication, meta communication, conversation partners' expertise and interests, loyalty, language skills and closeness, and transference and countertransference. Chapter 4 discusses techniques of conversing and interviewing, focusing on the structure of a conversation and types of questions. Chapter 5 discusses conversing based on children's age, with regard to meta communication, the form in which the conversation takes place, the verbal aspect, the nonverbal aspect, interview techniques, and motivation. The book concludes by asserting that children are prepared to talk with adults when they feel that they are treated with respect and are being taken seriously, and that opportunities for authentic self-expression during childhood and youth can prevent problems during adulthood. The book's two appendices list characteristics of conversations based on children's age and provide a checklist for conducting interviews with children. (Contains 89 references.) (KB)

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